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STATE FOR NEA/ARPI, NEA/PA, NEA/AIA, INR/NESA, R/MR, I/GNEA, B/BXN,  
B/BRN, NEA/PPD, NEA/IPA FOR ALTERMAN  
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SUBJECT: KUWAIT MEDIA REACTION: HAMAS VICTORY

Selected Headlines

11. Monday, January 30 2006

-- Al-Rai Al-Aam p. 69 "Ambassador Kurtzer: Palestinian elections were fair, however, we have to distinguish between democratic option and government's policy"

12. Tuesday, January 31 2006

-- Al-Rai Al-Aam p. 33 "Dr. Mohammed Al-Rumaihi: 'Is Hamas' victory an impasse or an opportunity?"; "Dr. Sajid Al-Abdali: Hamas and challenges of a tough future"

13. Sunday, February 5 2006

-- Al-Qabas p. 8 "Palestinians of Kuwait welcome victory by Hamas"

-- Al-Rai Al-Aam p. 54 "Dr. Wael Al-Hasawi: What will follow Hamas' victory?"

-- Al-Watan p. 19 "Suleiman Hamad congratulates the Palestinians, Arabs and Muslims on the victory by Hamas in legislative elections"

-- Al-Seyassah p. 33 "Khaled Al-Saad: Palestine between Hamas and Abbas"

Block Quotes

14. Wednesday, February 1, 2006

-- Dr. Shafiq Nazem Al-Ghabra wrote in the moderate daily Al-Rai Al-Aam under the title "Hamas' victory... new horizons": "Hamas' victory in the Palestinian elections was a shock to Hamas itself as it did not expect to win and has not adjusted to the requirements of this era. It is a shock to Israel who got rid of Arafat only to face Hamas and a shock to the United States of America whose complete negligence of the Palestinian situation led to Hamas' victory. Palestine is at the beginning of a new era. This is the first time that Fatah has lost power since it taking over the Liberation Organization in 1968. The coming years present the following ramifications: First, Fatah will realize that the refusal of its aging leaders to hand power to the new generation led to its defeat against the well-organized Hamas. Second, Hamas will learn the necessities of rule for which it is preparing. Third, Hamas will succeed in uprooting political and economic corruption that has become widespread in Palestine. Fourth, Israel and the United States

will realize that without serious initiatives on all levels there will be no peace. Fifth, what happened in Palestine was a victory for democracy that must be respected and understood as a victory for the voters before being a victory for a religious or political trend that many of us differ with its political and social views. Hamas must realize that it should not force its religious agenda or its interpretation of Islamic law upon the rest of the Palestinians."

15. Thursday, February 2, 2006

-- Adel Al-Qassar wrote in the progressive daily Al-Qabas under the title "Hamas' government... money for arms": "They want it to be a movement without fangs, and a group that has no self-defense capabilities. Domestic and international pressures are pushing Hamas to disarm, without a will, they want to silence its voice and put out its fire. They want to do all this through their low financial blackmailing ways. The Palestinians have spoken and decided their destiny when they chose Hamas not because of what America claims that it wants -- to eradicate Israel -- but rather because Hamas represents the new generation who are willing to do all that it may take to achieve their rights and their occupied land. The West, both European and American, with its dumfounded response to Hamas' victory threatened to cut-off financial aid as if wanting to punish the Palestinian people for their democratic choice. In other words, the West want to say to Hamas there is no escaping the equation of money for arms as the United States did with Iraq with the Oil for Food program. We thank and salute the Saudi Foreign Minister Saud Al-Faisal who broke the Arab state of silence and said that his country will continue to be the largest Arab financial supporter of the Palestinians and he criticized the European Union for cutting its aid claiming that it is unrealistic. We do not know whether the rest of the Arab and Muslim governments are waiting for permission from Washington to declare the Palestinian Authority under Hamas' control. Give Hamas a chance and give them the necessary financial

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support so you can see with your own eyes the difference between those who sell their cause and those who burn their own blood to light the road map."

16. Saturday, February 4, 2006

-- Dr. Shamlan Yousef Al-Eisa wrote in the pro-government daily Al-Seyassah under the title "A lesson from Hamas' victory": "There is a debate around the world regarding Hamas' victory and how to deal with it after having the majority of seats in the Palestinian parliament. Hamas' victory is a direct result of the Palestinian people's confidence that the movement's program for resistance of the Israeli occupation and righting corruption as well as Hamas' programs for internal reform. Hamas gaining power is clear evidence that the Islamic trends that in the past saw democracy as an evil Western practice that threatens Islam while Muslims now are starting to see the benefits of this ideology. They have realized that democracy and not violence nor terrorism is the only way to gain power in a peaceful and legitimate manner. The Arab populations' experience with revolutionary movements has only driven them into economic deterioration, the repeal of freedoms, the elimination of political participation, and the violation of human rights. That is why people are turning to Islamic political parties in hope of ridding themselves of tyrannical rule and political repression."

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